GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2632
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2000
EPILEPSY CASES
UTTAMRAO NATHUJI DHIKALE

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there would be 5-5 million epilepsy cases in the country by 2001 as discussed in Indo-UK workshop on epilepsy held at Chennai recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the preventive steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. It is estimated that there are 6-8 million people with epilepsy in India. There is a significant urban-rural difference in the prevalence of epilepsy as indicated by the estimate of 2-3 million in urban areas and 4-5 million in rural areas. The high prevalence, particularly in the rural areas of India, may be attributed to a multiplicity of factors, namely, inadequate/poor care of the pregnant mother, non-availability of safe delivery services for babies and want of proper facilities for prompt diagnosis and treatment of brain infections in infancy and early childhood.

(c) Epilepsy is treated by General Physicians in all hospitals. The reproductive and child health programme being implemented by the Government will also contribute in reducing the incidence of epilepsy in case of almost 80% people affected by epilepsy, available and affordable drugs can effectively control the fits and these people can lead normal lives and function as useful citizens of the country. Further prevention of road traffic accidents resulting in head injuries should also go a long way in decreasing the occurrence of epilepsy.